



NEWS RELEASE

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Rhode Island Man Pleads to Arranging to Meet 12-Year-Old Girl for Sex

An 18-year-old Rhode Island man pleaded no contest today to charges that he flew to Southern California to have sex with a 12-year-old girl, the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office announced.

Joel Rivera entered his plea to one count each of meeting minor for lewd purposes, distributing or showing pornography to a minor and contact with minor for sexual purposes.

Sentencing is scheduled for April 15 in Department A16 of the Los Angeles County Superior Court, Antelope Valley Branch.

Deputy District Attorney Jon Hatami said Rivera began contacting the Palmdale girl through an anonymous webcam chatting app in August. Rivera exchanged sexually explicit images with the child for nearly a month through various messaging apps, the prosecutor said.

When the girl's mother became aware that Rivera planned to fly in from Rhode Island to have sex with the victim, the mother contacted the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, the prosecutor added. Rivera was arrested at Burbank Bob Hope Airport on Sept. 3.

Case MA066878 was investigated by the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, Special Victims Bureau.

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[About the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office](#)

Los Angeles County District Attorney Jackie Lacey leads the largest local prosecutorial office in the nation. Her staff of nearly 1,000 attorneys, 300 investigators and 800 support staff members is dedicated to protecting our community through the fair and ethical pursuit of justice and the safeguarding of crime victims' rights.

